Fragments on the Gospel of Luke

Origen of Alexandria (c. AD 233–250)

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Fragment 1

"And standing over her, he rebuked the fever." The Savior comes to Simon's house and finds his mother-in-law burning with fever. "He stood over her, rebuked the fever, and it left." Perhaps, then, in the words "the fever left her," as Matthew and Mark report them, and in their whole account, nothing suggests a living creature that produces the fever. But in Luke's words, "standing over her he rebuked the fever and it left," I do not know whether we will be forced to say that what is rebuked and leaves is a living thing, one that cannot withstand the working of the one who rebukes it. For it is not reasonable to say that something lifeless, with no power of perception, is rebuked. It is not strange that there are certain powers that harm the human body. Nor should we always accuse the soul of those who suffer, as if it were harmed by these things. The devil struck Job with a wicked sore because he had received authority to test him through the body. But Job is not to be accused on that account, since he contended and bore the blow nobly. Only let this be said, if ever we are tried by bodily pains: "but [do not touch] his soul." In the same way the Lord, by rebuking, heals those who are sick. ["Rebuked"] is put here in place of "commanded."

Fragment 2

“And as the sun was setting.” They brought these people near sunset rather than in the daytime. Perhaps they were ashamed, or afraid of the Pharisees, or occupied with other things. Or perhaps they thought it was not lawful to heal on the sabbath, for the evangelist noted that “he was teaching them on the sabbath.” For this reason their relatives brought the sick at the setting of the sun, and he healed them.

Fragment 3

"He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret." Why was he standing by the lake, when according to Matthew and Mark "he was walking by the sea of Galilee"? The evangelists seem to say opposite things. But anyone who tries to answer from Scripture can say this about the passage. At the beginning of the making of the world, God called the gatherings of [waters] "seas." Rivers too are gatherings of waters, and so these also are seas. So too the very sweet and most drinkable "lake of Gennesaret," now called "Tiberias" in the Gospels, is a sea, especially since it too is a gathering of waters. Gennesaret is a region in the portion of the Canaanite. As the Lord went along the shore there, he found Peter and John and those with them, and called them again after the catch of fish. They had earlier been disciples of John the Baptist.

Fragment 4

"Behold, a man full of leprosy." In the literal account, after the sending away of the little bird, the one who was cleansed first "washes his clothes." Then he "shaves off every hair" and bathes in water, and after this it is added, "and he will be clean." The "clothes" are a way of life not altogether badly woven, since even if he put [it] off [...]. The "hairs" are the things that have sprouted up dead in the soul. Opposed to these are the hairs of [...] and of the Nazirites and of the disciples. For of the Nazirites it is said, "iron shall not come up on the head." This means all they do prospers, so that not even a leaf falls from them as they bear fruit. Already he puts the defilement away from the body with water, which shows baptism. After this he becomes fit for the camp, but he does not go into his own house until [seven] days have passed. And as to the head being shaved [...], this is because of the more central points of doctrine. The putting away of the beard stands for the man's sins. By the eyebrows he showed [...]

Fragment 5

“He ordered him to tell no one.” The covering of the mouth shows that a man must condemn himself to silence until he has returned and cleansed himself. It is not out of place to apply this text to those who are guilty of sins and yet have set themselves to teach about divine things.

Fragment 6

"Bring for your cleansing." If you like, take the "living flesh" to mean reason, the Word. When reason is not present in the soul, whatever happens, the one who sins is not to blame, since he is in the condition of a creature without reason. But if reason is present, he is accountable. Why, then, does the disease spreading over the whole body perhaps indicate, figuratively, frenzies or fits of melancholy, or the condition of infancy? For when reason gives no help and sense perception is not present, nothing done or said is sin. It is sin only when perception is present. We should also put it this way: we please God in two ways. If we live to God, let nothing in us be dead. If we have died to sin, let nothing of sin be alive in us. For while we live in him, let us refuse the deadness that comes from sin. Having died to the world, let us not run back to the passions. We die to sin by putting to death "the members that are on the earth." "We died to sin; how shall we still live in it?" So defilement, even if it is slight, is also unclean according to the law, just as it is clean to be dead to sin altogether. For, he says, "a little [leaven] leavens the whole." Some have called "unclean" the deadness that comes from a wicked disposition, such as licentiousness or injustice. They call "clean" what makes no [distinction] about anything bodily, provided it does not arise from wickedness. A foreign [marriage] is not unclean unless it comes from licentiousness. Food is not unclean unless it comes from lack of self-control. Work on the Sabbath is not unclean unless it is done for gain. According to some, [again], the law declares clean the man who is leprous all over. This shows that God hates what is mixed and variegated. As the law goes on it shows this more clearly: "You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, and a garment woven from two materials is counterfeit; and you shall not breed your cattle with a different kind." Everywhere it prefers simplicity, which can be seen in the man who is leprous all over.

Fragment 7

“And after these things he went out and saw a tax collector.” “He went out,” it says, “and saw a tax collector called Levi.” This is Matthew the evangelist. Mark and Luke hide his name under his earlier title. Matthew, however, makes his own name plain, saying, “He saw Matthew the tax collector.” He says these things so that we, marveling at the skill of God who healed him, may believe in him with the greatest certainty.

Fragment 8

"Blessed are those who weep now, for you will laugh." He promises the laughter that comes from joy and cheerfulness. So it says in Job, "He will fill a true mouth with laughter." Perhaps for this reason one of the patriarchs is called "Laughter," the name signifying divine cheerfulness.

Fragment 9

“For there is no good tree that produces rotten fruit.” The “good tree” is the Holy Spirit. The “bad tree” is the devil and his servants. So the person who has the Holy Spirit displays the Spirit’s fruits, which the apostle lists when he says, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” But the person who has the opposing power bears “the passions of dishonor,” “thorns and thistles.”

Fragment 10

“And behold, a woman who was a sinner in the city.” The more perfect soul has served the Word of God well. It has boldness to come to the very head. “The head of Christ is God.” So it can pour ointment on that head and surround the glory of God with fragrance. For God is glorified through the fragrance of the lives of the righteous. The less perfect woman, the less perfect soul, busies herself about the feet and the lowlier things, and we are close to her. [The text here is corrupt: it seems to say that we do not even reach the feet because of our sins.] Where are our tears? Where is our weeping, so that we might at least be able to come to the feet of Jesus? For we cannot yet reach the head itself. It is a welcome thing, after sins, to bring the fragrance of repentance, so that someone may be able to be the second woman, the one who anoints the feet and not the head. That is, she does not touch the more perfect and higher things, but the outermost and last.

Fragment 11

Luke 8:16: “No one who lights a lamp covers it with a vessel.” This is not said about a lamp you can see and touch, but about a lamp of the mind. No one who lit a physical lamp would cover it with a vessel or put it under a bed; he would put it on its lampstand. The “vessels” of the house could be the powers of the soul, and the “bed” the body. Those who come in are the hearers of the one who shares the word with them. The lampstand is the ruling part of the soul, since it is the place of speech, or rather the mouth, when someone opens it with the word of God. In either case, those who make their way in to God will see the light, and the light is the knowledge with which he has lit up himself. Someone who wants to apply the lamp to the most perfect of Jesus’ disciples will shame us with what was said about John, that “he was the lamp that burns” and shines. The lamp also stands for the mind in each person. Yet the saying, “Let your lamps be burning,” was spoken to all the disciples of Jesus. So a person must not hide the lamp that has been lit in a reasoning soul. He must set it on the lampstand, of which Moses’ lampstand, which he “placed in the tent of testimony,” was a symbol. Let fellow servants be measured out their grain by the “faithful and wise servant” with a measure, but let everyone see the rays of the lamp that sits on the lampstand, that is, on the church.

Nor do people put the lamp “under the bed,” where someone lies down to rest, nor “under” any other “vessel.” Whoever does that has no thought for those who come into the house, for whom the lamp has to be set. Those who kindle the mind within them with the “true light,” with the shining word, and with the rays of wisdom, have a mind with the nature the Creator gave it. Such a mind needs a lamp, that is, to be kindled from the Word, from wisdom, and from the truth of the true light. We should hold that the command “Let your lamps be burning” is fulfilled by those who take care to keep in the soul a mind of sharp sight, one that shares in the One who said, “I have come as a light into the world.” For those who burn the lamp and set it on the lampstand to shine for everyone in the house will also urge those in the house, as they see the brightness of the lamp, to light their own lampstand too.

Fragment 12

Perhaps the Lord calls himself the “lamp.” By becoming part of the divine plan of salvation he shines on everyone in the house. He is light by his very being, and like a lamp he is held, without being limited, in the clay vessel of the flesh, with the soul in the middle like a wick through which the fire burns. He names the holy church the “lampstand.” On it the Word of God shines through the preaching and floods with the rays of truth all who live in this world as in a house, filling everyone’s mind with divine knowledge. He has used the “measuring bowl” as a symbol of the synagogue of the Jews and the bodily worship of the law, the symbols of old in the letter. This worship has no knowledge at all of the light of true understanding in the mind. The Word does not want to be held down under that measure. He wants to be set on high, on the greatness of the church’s beauty.

Fragment 13

Anyone held by the letter of the law, as under a measuring bowl, would have been deprived of everlasting light. He would give no spiritual understanding to those who hurry to strip off the senses as deceptive. “But he is put on the lampstand.” He means the church, that is, the reasoning worship in the Spirit, so that he may give light to all and teach those in the whole world to live and conduct themselves by the Word alone. So let us not light the divine lamp, the Word who gives light, through contemplation and action, and then put it under the measure. Otherwise we will be condemned for confining by the letter the boundless power of wisdom. Rather, I say, let us put it “on the lampstand,” the holy church, on the height of true contemplation, which sets the light of the divine teachings blazing for all. [But these things were also discussed in Matthew, so it is unnecessary to go on at length here.]

Fragment 14

8:39 “Return to your house.” He sends him to his own house. [The Greek here is damaged. It seems to say: for he did not have so great a measure of power.] There may be some who become hearers and disciples of such a man. Those who cannot take in the presence of Jesus any more fully he cared for no less than the one who could, since [that man] proclaims from the few things he has received. You could also apply the account to the nature of the man outside Israel. For his sake Jesus sails across to the country of the Gergesenes, and to meet him Jesus comes out onto the land. “He did not put on a garment,” it says. The man had not put on what covers his shame. “And he did not stay in a house,” for he was not, like Jacob, “a plain man living in a house.” So Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your [house].” “And he lived in the tombs,” not among the living but among the dead. “Now there was,” it says, “a herd of many pigs feeding on the mountain.” But perhaps pigs do not feed on a mountain. How then did “the herd rush down the cliff”? Perhaps, then, those who love pleasure, friends of the belly and of what lies below the belly, feed where the tombs are, near the legion of demons. In his goodness Jesus destroys the life of the pigs in the water. Through the demons he cuts off the breath of those wicked lovers of pleasure and of the body. Perhaps such a man even becomes self-controlled. If anyone is self-controlled, he is with Jesus. But the one who is only beginning to be self-controlled is “at his feet.”

Fragment 15

8:41 “And behold, a man came whose name was Jairus.” Such is the history of the miracle. But perhaps we should also look at it more closely and at a higher level. Let the simpler and more guileless people marvel at these great works of God, for they build up faith even when understood in a bodily way. But there are those who can cross over to seeing that these things happened to those people as types, and that they were written for [our sake; the text is incomplete here]. Let us pray to God and ask that a word come to make these things clear as well. How was it that Jesus was going first of all to the daughter of the synagogue ruler, and not to the woman with the flow of blood who met him on the road? And how was it that, though he was going first of all to the girl, this woman was healed first? For the Son of God came first of all to the daughter of the synagogue ruler, the synagogue of the Jews, and found her sick and dead. The transgressions of Israel made her die. But the woman with the flow of blood, the one on the road, full of uncleanness, flowing “not at the time of her monthly separation” but bleeding always and sick with the blood-red sin, is the church from the nations. She believes in the Son of God before that other one does. He goes off to the girl, but the woman follows him and wants to touch at least “the fringe of his garment.” Luke added something Matthew did not say: that the synagogue ruler’s daughter was twelve years old, and that the woman had been bleeding for twelve years. So she began to bleed at the same time that the girl was born.

For the girl is in unbelief for as long as the synagogue lives. The same limit of time marks the end of that one and the beginning of this woman’s salvation. The girl dies at twelve years. And after twelve years of suffering, this woman believes and is healed, she who “could not be healed by” the physicians. For many physicians promised to heal those from the nations. If you see those who practice philosophy and profess to teach truth, they are physicians trying to heal. But she spent everything she had, and “she could not be healed by any” of the physicians. Then she touched the fringe of Jesus, the only physician of souls and bodies, and through her fiery, burning faith she was healed at once. If we look at our faith in Christ Jesus and understand how great the Son of God is, and whom we have touched, we will see that, compared with the fringes that are in him, we have touched only a fringe. Even so, the fringe heals us and makes us hear from Jesus, “Daughter, your faith has saved you.” And if we are healed, the daughter of the synagogue ruler will also rise. For, he says, “When the fullness of the nations has come in, then all Israel will be saved.”

Fragment 16

8:45 “And Jesus said, ‘Who touched me?’” The disciples pressed against him and handled him. But the woman with the flow of blood did not touch him, for she did not dare. Out of reverence she touched only the fringe.

Fragment 17

“She reported before all the people how she was healed.” Before this she did not dare, out of reverence, to meet him face to face and ask for healing. But now that she is sought out, she comes forward as she should, fearful and reverent, and showing the respect that fits the moment. She makes her confession of healing plain to everyone. She does not make it for the one who knows all things, but for those who did not know. “She knew in her body that she was healed of the scourge.” For the bleeding was a scourge. In the same way you may say that other bodily sufferings are scourges of God, since through them he scourges those who are worthy of his discipline: “He scourges every son whom he receives.” So he also said to the paralytic, whom he likewise released from a scourge, “See, you have become well; sin no more, so that nothing worse happens to you.” Here too the healing the woman received through touching, the Savior confirmed by his word when he said, “Go in peace, and be well of your scourge.” And may she be made well first in her soul by faith, and then in her body also.

Fragment 18

“He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God.” Was it, then, before this, when he sent out the twelve to proclaim, that he forbade them to confess that he was the Christ? One may say that he wanted first to instruct, in a rather dim way, those who would hear the name of Christ from the apostles. Then he wanted to let it be, so to speak, digested in the minds of those who heard. So there would be silence about proclaiming such a thing concerning him, and at a more fitting time Jesus Christ, crucified and raised from the dead, would be built up in those who had been instructed beforehand. In the beginning not even the apostles themselves knew these things. So it says: “From that time Jesus began to show them that he must suffer many things,” and die and rise again. If he had been proclaimed in this way earlier, the things about him would not have been made clear. So for now he commands them to be silent about him. He is keeping the more complete teaching about him for a more suitable time, when the disciples who had seen him risen could bear witness, to those who had seen him crucified, of his resurrection from the dead.

Fragment 19

"To proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal." There is a sin of the soul that is death, which John calls "a sin leading to death." There is a sin of the soul that is sickness. And there is a sin of the soul that is loss, as the word "having suffered loss" is used here, and in the apostle: "If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss." [Origen said this but did not add the distinction between them.]

Fragment 20

“It happened, after these words, about eight days later.” Matthew says “six,” counting neither the day on which the words were spoken nor the day on which he was transfigured, but only the six days in between. Luke, however, joined them on as whole days.

Fragment 21

Let us ask how Luke says, “It happened after these words, about eight days,” while Mark says, “after about six days.” As far as the wording “about eight days later” goes, Luke counts this day as well, the one on which it happens, while Mark counts only the days in between. So there is no disagreement as to the wording. But carrying the argument to a higher level, I would say that it was not for nothing that the Savior did what he had promised, not at once but after six days. The six days are a symbol of the making of the world, that is, they mean after this world. For then Jesus takes up into the high mountain whoever is a Peter or a James or a John. No one else goes up except the three, so that he may see the transfiguration of Jesus, and Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory.

Fragment 22

"He took Peter, John and James and went up." The transfiguration on the mountain was shown to the disciples as a preview of the glory the Savior would have in the future. It was shown in bodily form, so that it could fall within the sight of their mortal eyes, even though they could not bear the excess of its brightness, [a brightness] so unmixed and unbearable to our eyes. The glory that belongs to the divine being is unseen and unapproachable by every created nature. The disciples proved this: they could not even endure this bodily appearance shown to them on the mountain, but fell to the ground. A person sees the Word transfigured in glory when he goes up with him, is lifted up with him, and sees him as the very Word himself and as high priest, conversing and praying to the Father. But since he had not yet brought his body completely to an incorruption that could not be changed, he was seen shining along with his perishable garments. For when the righteous rise in glory at Christ's second coming, they will not have perceptible garments, but certain radiant robes will be put around them. Just as the appearance of those garments was not different from that of the transfiguration, so in the resurrection the appearance of the saints will be far more glorious than what they had in this life, though not a different one. Those with Jesus were seen in glory by the disciples: Moses, showing the face of the law, and Elijah, that of the prophets; for he himself was the Lord of the law and the prophets. So the person who has understood the spiritual law, and the wisdom "hidden in a mystery" in the prophets, sees Moses and Elijah in glory.

Fragment 23

“And behold, two men were talking with him.” They converse with one another, that is, they speak in agreement with each other. He joined those of the old covenant to the apostles, showing that at Christ’s second coming all the righteous will be joined together.

Fragment 24

“Master, it is good for us to be here.” Peter had heard that Christ was going to suffer, and he thought he had found an opportunity to say what he did not want to happen. So he asked the Lord to stay up on the mountain permanently, so that the Jews would not find him when he came down and kill him. He did not know that all good things were going to come from the suffering and the resurrection. “While he was saying these things, a cloud overshadowed them.” The cloud cut short his meddling, his seeking something beyond his own capacity. By this it also gave an advance picture that all the saints, those before his coming and those after it, will be together. It also showed that law, prophets and gospel lead into the same tents. They are counted as three, but look toward one end. And it showed that in the resurrection the saints will be “caught up in clouds to meet the Lord, and to be with him” forever.

Fragment 25

“And they themselves kept silent and told no one.” Jesus did not want the things of his glory to be told before the glory that comes after his suffering. The hearers would have been harmed, especially the crowds, seeing someone so glorified being crucified. So the disciples did not hide it out of envy, but out of fear that they would not be believed. Luke says, “And they themselves kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.” When, then, did they tell? After the ascension, after the coming of the Spirit. For then they were filled with boldness and counted worthy of the Spirit. They had the voice of the signs speaking in their defense, and from then on everything they said was readily accepted.

Fragment 26

"But they did not understand this saying." What he means is this: even if you do not understand these words now, you will understand them in due time, once you have put away your ignorance. That will be when you turn to me completely and the veil is taken away. I will remove it from you in the Passion itself, and the sign of this you will see in the curtain of the temple torn in two. Perhaps, too, it holds generally for those who are learning that the words of what is handed on must at first be not understood, and the sayings must be veiled. Then later, after the hearers have laid the words up in their ears, the meaning is made clear, as the words are carried over from the ears to the heart. Notice, then, that he spoke to the disciples themselves at first in parables, which they heard along with those outside, and afterward, "privately," he "explained everything" to them. In the same way we, when we have pondered the words and at first understood nothing, begin as it were to see again through constant study. The Word shines little by little "in our hearts" "to give the light of the knowledge of his glory." The phrase "is about to be handed over," in Matthew and Luke, plainly raises the question: by whom? So, as we said, one person will answer, "By Judas," and another, "By the people." But since Judas and the people were human beings, we should stop and ask whether it is better to follow Paul, who says of the Father, "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all." There the words "by God" are left unstated.

When you come to this point, you will ask whether the word "handed over" means the same thing when it is applied to Judas as when it is applied to God. Someone who says it means the same will put the difference in the purpose. Judas handed him over for silver, with a plot against him, whereas the Father handed him over to do us good. Look further at how it is said: "so that they would not perceive it." Just as there is such a thing as failing to perceive in the senses, which often happens to perceptible things because of some passion, so also with the ruling faculty of the mind it is possible to be without perception of a word or saying, or to perceive it only with difficulty. And since "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of perception," perhaps the fear the disciples felt was bad. It arose from their ignorance of the saying, and the veil was hindering them from learning by asking. For the one who arranged their ignorance and veiled the saying from them could see that if the Savior were questioned and answered, the ignorance and the veil would be taken away. At the same time, compare this: with the parables the disciples "asked him privately" and "were not afraid to

ask." Now they "were afraid to ask him about this saying." The one who produced the ignorance and the veiling in them was arranging something. He was keeping the removal of the ignorance and of the veil for a suitable time, for he was "about to be handed over into the hands of men."

Fragment 27

“But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” So if you are ready, my friend, you will choose, because of my teaching, to live unsettled here, as I do, with nowhere to lay my head, in hope of the kingdom of heaven. You will not look for rest here, but in the age to come. For my disciples, who practice righteousness, “will have tribulation in the world.” But the “evil men and impostors” are compared in this life to foxes and birds of the air, and “will advance, deceiving and being deceived.” The words Paul spoke, in whom Christ was speaking, fit especially well with “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head”: “we are homeless.”

Fragment 28

What he is saying is this: unless you rid yourself of the birds and beasts, that is, the demons, I cannot lodge in you. And being such as you are, you cannot receive the dignity of an apostle.

Fragment 29

"Let the dead bury their own dead." There is also a higher sense. When the young man's father was dead, then the Savior called him. I think that, just as the world had been crucified to Paul and was dead to him, because the affairs of the world had died for him and he no longer regarded them as "things seen" and "temporary," so for each righteous person the devil has died, who lived for him while he sinned. For everyone "who commits sin has been born of the devil," and for everyone who sins and fixes his attention on things here, the evil father lives. To everyone for whom the evil one has died, the Savior may say, "Follow me." Perhaps, understood mystically, this also means that we must hate our father if we are to be worthy of Jesus. The words "bury their own dead" are to be taken only as allegory. For the dead in a way bury "their own dead" within themselves, becoming their tombs and monuments. But the one who obeys Jesus leaves the dead completely behind and never touches it again, for he knows that whoever touches a dead body is defiled.

Fragment 30

"No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back." Each of us is his own plowman, and our own soul is the land. We must break it up as fallow ground with the plow of reason, after yoking the oxen, the workers, from the pure Scriptures. For then a person will make new the soul that has grown old through long idleness in time past, which has produced much wickedness and fruitless works. He will cut out [the old growth] with the plow of the word and make the ground fresh. Then he will sow seeds from the divine teaching: seeds of the law, of the prophets, and of the gospel, remembering it and meditating on it. This is why the God of all also says through Jeremiah the prophet: "Break up fresh ground for yourselves, and do not sow among thorns." For it is not [possible] simply to receive the seed and bear fruit without first cleansing our souls and casting out every passion, and the cares and pleasures of this life, which are the thorns. Therefore he says: "Turn away from evil and do good."

Fragment 31

“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others.” That is what Luke says about the seventy. Mark says that “he called the twelve and sent them out two by two, giving them authority over unclean spirits.” This sending “two by two” to serve the word seems to be in keeping with God’s purpose, and it is ancient, going back to Moses and Aaron when the people came out of the land of Egypt. God brought Israel out by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Then Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, both of one mind, quieted the people when they were stirred up by the ten. Eldad and Modad also prophesied in the tent, both in agreement. Later he sent Paul and Barnabas out to the nations, and such men were an example of the “two on earth” who agree. You may also apply to these the words “a brother helped by a brother is like a fortified city,” and “two are better than one.” Matthew shows in his list that the twelve also were arranged in pairs, for he ordered them by couples.

Fragment 32

“Say to them: the kingdom of God has come near to you.” Just as you do good to bodies, so by teaching save souls. Here he calls himself the kingdom of God, as King and God. “It has come near,” he says, and he will soon visit you. Become worthy, and prepare yourselves to receive him. I think the difference between a house and a city is also stated in the Psalms, in the words: “Unless the Lord builds the house, and unless the Lord guards the city, the one who keeps watch has stayed awake in vain.” Notice there that what is still being built is called a “house,” while what is already worthy of guarding and garrisoning is called a “city.” It is for the greater house, the city, that he set the words “they receive you.”

Fragment 33

"The dust that clung to our feet from your city we wipe off against you." This means: "Say that the dust of your sins may come back upon you." Notice that the cities that do not receive apostles and sound teaching have broad streets, in keeping with the words: "Wide is the gate and spacious the road that leads [to destruction], and many are those who go through it." You should also know that a city that does not [receive] the apostles is filled with stirred-up earth, which makes the air murky and choking. But a city that receives them either has no dust at all from the beginning, or, if it has some in certain sins, it lays the dust aside, being cleansed by the apostles.

Fragment 34

"I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth." He wants to reveal as the Word, not without reason; as Wisdom, wisely; as Righteousness, justly. He knows, according to what each one deserves, the right times for revealing and the measures of the revelation. He reveals by taking away the veil lying on the heart and the "darkness" which he made "his hiding place." For in this way a person will be able, like Moses, "to enter into the thick darkness where God was." The heterodox think they can establish their impious doctrine from this passage, namely that the Father of Jesus Christ was unknown to those under the old covenant. We must answer them that "to whom the Son wishes" does not refer only to the future, from the time the Savior said these things to us. It refers to the past as well. For the word "to reveal" is of indefinite time, and it can refer to something in the past. We must also use against them the Scripture that says: "Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad." Those who heard this said, "You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?" The Savior answers, "Amen, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." So the one who said this showed himself to Abraham at that time, so that Abraham might then see his day. But if they refuse to accept the word "reveal" as referring to the past, we must say this to them as well: "to know" is not the same as "to believe." For "to one is given through the Spirit a word of knowledge, to another faith in the same Spirit." So even by their own reckoning there could be people who believe but do not also know. Let it be granted, then, according to them, that Abraham did not know the Father but only believed. For the one who knows him as God does not [necessarily] know him as Father. Many people, at any rate, have a notion of God as Creator, yet they do not confess him as the Father of a Son.

Fragment 35

For the awareness of a present lack becomes the preparation for the fullness that follows. But the one who does not perceive that he lacks what is truly good, because what seems good to him is already there, is naturally left lacking the true good. This, then, is the good pleasure of the Father that Christ makes known. God had spoken of it long ago through the prophet: “On whom will I look, if not on the gentle and quiet one, who trembles at my words continually?” So God did not honor foolishness above wisdom. He preferred humility to pride, and he naturally left behind the one who, through his own insensibility, had shut off the benefit from himself. So the humble and childlike person says: “Teach me yourself the truth that concerns you. For I cannot learn it from a human being unless I learn it from you. Who ought to teach about God, if not God?” Revelation, then, comes from above, after a purpose that is fitting.

Fragment 36

“All things have been handed over to me by my Father.” Close to this is the saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” And the reason “all authority” is given to him is that he might “make peace through his cross, whether things on earth or things in the heavens.” He has not yet made peace with all things. This is clear from the fact that there is still war that comes from evil. But complete peace will certainly come. It is most just that the Father has handed “all things” over to him, since the Son himself was handed over “for all.” He “is the Savior of all people, especially of believers”; [he is the propitiation] for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. He was handed over insofar as he became man, “so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.”

Fragment 37

“Blessed are the eyes that see what you see.” Why are the eyes of Jesus’ disciples blessed? Because “many prophets wished to see” what these saw, “and did not see it,” and to hear what they heard, “and did not hear it.” As for the words “to see,” simpler people suppose it means this: many prophets, as they prophesied about me, wished to be born in my times, so that they might “see what you see and hear what you hear.” But they were not fortunate enough to reach these times, in which you have been counted worthy of these things. But what is the reason that many prophets desired these things, and not all of them? Perhaps, as we have already explained about Abraham, who “saw the day of Christ and rejoiced,” something similar happened with other prophets and righteous men. They were not many but few, and they had reached the vision and understanding which Jesus’ disciples heard. Because these few had already seen what the apostles saw and heard what the disciples of Jesus heard, they did not desire it; they possessed it “as though not possessing it.” But others became prophets and righteous men who fell short of the vision and understanding found in the apostles, and these did not obtain what they desired.

So now eyes are called blessed, and I think the other members of the saints are too, so that there is some reason behind the saying, “Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you nursed.” And how could the “feet” not be blessed, those that have not stumbled or been shaken, but are “beautiful” among those who bring good news? Blessed also are the hands whose lifting up is “an evening sacrifice,” and whose lifting up is victory for Israel and defeat for Amalek. Blessed is the belly from which “rivers flow of water springing up to eternal life.” Blessed are the knees that “are bent in the name of Jesus.” Blessed also is the tongue that “confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Blessed too is the “mouth” that serves the word of God, and the nose, for which it is said, “After you, to the fragrance of your perfumes, we will run.” [These things were said by Origen. If anyone thinks them excellent, let him think so; they do not please me, since they are open to objection.]

Fragment 38

“He himself entered a certain village.” The Savior lodged with holy women in a certain village. Luke passes over its name in silence, but John makes it clear by saying it was Bethany.

Fragment 39

It would be reasonable to take Martha as standing for action and Mary for contemplation. For the mystery of love is included along with the practical life, unless someone, besides contemplating, chooses also to teach and to urge others toward action. For neither action nor contemplation exists without the other. Better, then, to say that Martha received the Word in a more bodily way, in her own house, which is the soul. Mary, however, listened to him spiritually, even while sitting at his feet. In this way, the things handed on at the beginning, by way of dispensation, are taken away by the one who [puts away] "the things of the child," but the things that are perfect are not taken away. Martha may also be the synagogue from the circumcision, which received Jesus within its own borders and was distracted by the great amount of service required by the letter of the law. Mary is then the church from the nations, which chose the "portion" of the spiritual law, [a law that is being set aside like the glory on the face of Moses]. She picked out the useful things from the law, or brought everything back to the one word, "You shall love." For "one thing is needed" you would apply "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," and for "few things are needed" you would apply "You know the commandments: do not commit adultery, do not murder," and so on. Again, Martha can be the believers from the circumcision who practice Jewish ways, keeping the things of the law in a Jewish manner. Mary would be those who have been set free from these things, "Jews in secret," who sit only at the feet of Jesus, who set their minds on "things above, not on things on the earth." For if you look at it from different angles, you will find Martha more bodily and "troubled about many things," and Mary devoted to contemplation alone and to spiritual things.

Fragment 40

"Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also…" Then, to show that he was still urging him toward teaching about prayer, he makes this appeal. John, about whom you taught us that "among those born of women there is none greater than he," did not neglect teaching about prayer. We also do not know how to pray as we ought. And you have commanded us to ask for great and eternal things. Where, then, can we learn these things, if not from you, our God and Savior?

Fragment 41

This is the same as the prayer in Matthew, which is why it is stated more briefly here. Or it is better to think of them as different prayers that have some parts in common. God's will "is done as in heaven, so on earth" when we do nothing contrary to his will. But how can the one who said we must ask for heavenly and great things command us to ask for bread? So "bread" must be understood as the true and spiritual bread.

Fragment 42

"Father, may your name be hallowed." I think no one could say "Father" to God unless he were filled with the "Spirit of adoption." A son who glorifies his father would say "Father," and he would also have kept the commandment that says: "Love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become sons of your Father in the heavens, because he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." Again, a person is born of God by "doing righteousness." Being born, and having received God's "seed in himself," so that he is "no longer able to sin," he could say "Father." Again, a person is born of God not from corruptible seed but through the living and abiding word of God, as it is written. For John says: "But as many as received him, he gave them the right to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God." He says this not to raise us up to the nature of God, but to share his grace with us and to give us the gift of his own dignity. For he tells us to call God Father. Then Matthew adds "in the heavens" to "our Father." He was speaking about the kingdom of the heavens, and he was recounting how the Savior taught all who were present the word about prayer after the beatitudes. Luke, though he teaches about the kingdom of God throughout his whole Gospel, is silent about "in the heavens." He is teaching that the divine is higher than any place. And Christ is explaining the word about prayer privately to the disciples, as people higher than the rest. Luke also does not add "to be delivered from the evil one," as Matthew does.

Fragment 43

Or perhaps it is like this. The name “God” is applied by those who fall away from the truth to carved images and demons, or even to “the creation instead of the Creator.” So the name of God has not yet been “hallowed,” and it has not yet been separated from those things from which it must be separated. He therefore teaches us to pray that the good end may come more quickly, so that the title “God” may be fitted to the Lord as “the only true God.” And with this interpretation we can clearly fit the next petition as well. Which one is that? “Your kingdom come.”

Fragment 44

"Your kingdom come." Let death no longer "reign" against me, and let it no longer lead me captive through sin. Instead, "let your kingdom come" upon me, so that the passions that now rule and reign may withdraw into non-being. One could ask these things also with regard to the kingdom as it comes about in each individual.

Fragment 45

"Your kingdom come," so that "every rule and authority and power" may be abolished, and also every kingdom of the world, and the sin that reigns in our mortal bodies, and so that God may reign over all of these.

Fragment 46

"Give us each day our epiousion bread." The followers of Marcion have the wording like this: "Give us each day your epiousion bread." Since they flee from allegories and spiritual interpretations, let us press them with a difficulty: what is the bread of God? If they explain it as we have given, then clearly they are using allegory. But if they take it to be bodily bread, how can this belong to their supposedly good God? And "each day" is necessarily added. For our true life is, as it were, something that must be repaired [day by day], so that "the inner man" may live according to God.

Fragment 47

“Each day” is more emphatic than Matthew’s “today.”

Fragment 48

"Which of you will have a friend, and will go to him?" The words "which of you" are spoken to the disciples. "Will have a friend" is meant to say that God is a friend to the saints, as he was to Moses and to Abraham. Perhaps this "midnight," which is called "shut in" [or "cramped"], is the time of this life, when the destroyer enters every house of the Egypt that is in the world, wherever the doorposts have not been anointed with the blood of Christ. The disciple asks his friend for "three loaves," wanting to feed with the teaching about the Trinity the one who has come to him from the road. As he says: "Apart from me you can do nothing." But how is it that the friend answers from inside, saying, "Do not cause me trouble"? You might also ask whether we who are "weary and burdened" bring our troubles upon the Savior, which is why "he bears our weaknesses and suffers pain for us." Or else, just as God is said to sleep in one case, and in another case, to be angry with someone who sins, so too he is said to have troubles from the one who brings them to him.

Fragment 49

"Ask, and it will be given to you." The Savior's statement, "Ask, and it will be given to you," is true, and he confirms it by saying, "Everyone who asks receives." Still, someone might ask how it is that some people pray and are not heard. To this we must say: whoever comes to ask by the proper way, leaving out nothing that contributes to obtaining what he is eager for, will certainly receive what he begged to be given. But if someone strays from the purpose of the request that was handed down to us, and only seems to ask, then he is not asking in the way he should, and he is not really asking at all. So when he does not receive, the saying "Everyone who asks receives" is not proved false. Consider a teacher who says, "Everyone who comes to me for lessons will gain knowledge of them." We understand "coming to the teacher" in a practical sense: that is, paying close attention to what the teacher says, and practicing and studying it. To the one who does not come this way, we must say, "You did not come to him as he urged you." James makes this clearer when he writes in his letter: "Some ask and do not receive, because they ask badly, for the sake of empty pleasures." Someone will object: "But some people ask for divine knowledge and for the acquiring of virtues, and they do not receive." To him we must answer that they did not seek to receive these good things for their own sake, but in order to be praised because of them. Taking pleasure in praise belongs to lovers of pleasure. So these people are not given anything either, since they want to spend on pleasures the very things they ask for.

Fragment 50

"Which of you, if his son asks his father..." Consider whether "bread" is the soul's necessary food in knowledge, without which it cannot be saved, such as the precise teaching about how one ought to live. And "fish" would be like a relish, the love of learning, such as "knowing the structure of the world, the working of the elements, the beginning and end and middle of times," and everything else that Wisdom goes on to list. So God does not give a stone in place of bread, which the devil wanted Jesus to eat. Nor does he give "a serpent in place of a fish." The serpent is eaten by the Ethiopians, who are unworthy to eat fish. For there the psalm says: "You crushed the head of the dragon on the water; you gave him as food to the Ethiopian peoples." Nor, in simple terms, does he give what is inedible and harmful in place of what is nourishing and beneficial.

Fragment 51

"When the unclean spirit goes out of the person, it passes through…" What does it mean that the evil spirit "passes through waterless places, seeking rest and not finding it"? The waterless places were once the people from the nations. Now they have been filled with water [of mine?], and they no longer give it rest. So Satan turns back to his former dwelling, those from Israel. When they were in Egypt, the evil spirit lived in them, because they shared the customs and laws of the Egyptians. When they were set free through Moses by God's mercy, it went out. But now they have not believed in Christ. They have pushed away the Redeemer, and so the unclean spirit has leapt on them again. It found nothing divine left in them, only emptiness, and them standing idle and open to its dwelling, and so it settled in with all its power. This seems to be what the text shows when it says that "seven" spirits are with it. Scripture is accustomed to name such a number for a multitude, as when it says, "The barren woman bore seven, and she who had many children grew weak." For the spirit they had in Egypt is not the kind that [those who acted against my son] now have. They have been filled with other evil spirits as well, and "the last things have become worse than the first." They are now worse off than they were in Egypt, because they did not believe in Jesus Christ but "killed the author of life," and so they were deprived of life. No prophet says to them any longer, "Thus says the Lord." There is no longer any sign among them, no wonder, no sign of God's appearing and presence. The good things have passed over to us from the nations, according to the word of Jesus, who said, "The kingdom of God will be taken from them and given to a nation producing its fruits." We are that nation, to whom belongs "the kingdom of God," the way of life of the gospel.

Fragment 52

"No one lights a lamp and puts it in a hidden place or under the measuring bowl." Let the fellow servants have their grain measured out in the measuring bowl by "the faithful and wise steward." But let "all those in the house," that is, in the church, see the rays of the lamp as it stands on the lampstand and is brought into the open through the word. Nor do people put the lamp "under the bed," where someone lies down to rest, or "under any vessel." Whoever does this takes no thought for those who are coming into the house.

Fragment 53

"The lamp of the body is your eye." It seems to me that in the words "the lamp of the body is the eye" he is saying something like this: the faculty of seeing clearly in the whole soul, in the whole person, is the mind. And so that we would take care of it, it was said, "Let your lamps be burning." For we light, as it were, the lamp within us when we take care of our power of understanding. "No one lights a lamp and puts it in a hidden place, but on the lampstand" is a saying of the same kind. For those light a lamp who care about wisdom and reason and training in divine things, so that they may become perfect. Perfection comes to a person in no other way than through the training of the faculties of perception, both of the senses and of the mind, in divine matters. Paul made this clear when he said, "Solid food belongs to the perfect, who through habit have their faculties trained to distinguish good from evil." These are the people to whom the wisdom spoken to the perfect can be spoken, about which he says, "We speak wisdom among the perfect." By "eye" he means, properly speaking, the mind in us. In the earnest person only, the source of this mind is simplicity, with no double-mindedness, deceit, splitting, dissension or division in it. In the base person, its source is wickedness and every sin. Consider also whether you can interpret "body" figuratively in a way that fits with "eye." Either the whole soul, even though it is not bodily, is here called "the body" (for God made the mind in the soul of a human being), or else what remains besides the mind, that is, the composite of the rest of the soul and the body, is what he calls the body.

For the whole soul is properly enlightened by the mind. Yet one could say that the mind's simplicity reaches even to the body, when the body is led by the mind. Or its wickedness reaches the body, when the mind uses the body as an instrument for sin. Do not be surprised if in the saying "the lamp of the body is the eye" we take "body" figuratively for the soul. The soul is, in its own definition, invisible and bodiless, for it was made according to the image of the invisible God. But we find that the powers of the soul are also figuratively called by the same names as the bodily parts, though they are not bodies. For in the words "enlighten my eyes" bodily eyes are not meant. In "he added an ear for me" the discourse is not about bodies either, nor when he says, "Let the one who has ears to hear, hear." In the Song, the bride is either the soul of a person brought up to share with Christ as her bridegroom, or the church. There the bridegroom praises her hair in particular, her teeth, her lips, her neck and her breasts. If these are explained of the soul, they are referred to its powers. You

could also find the words "my foot shall not stumble" applied to the soul's power of moving forward. You will find many such passages yourself if you pay attention to Scripture. They will keep you from stumbling over how "body" is meant in the saying

"the lamp of the body is the eye," and in similar places. In Proverbs you will find "divine perception" spoken of as a promise, in contrast to perception that is not divine. The perception that even the irrational animals share is not divine: they see and hear, taste, smell and touch. The perception that is divine is one that not even all human beings share. It belongs to those who have done such things as the verse refers to when it adds, "you will find divine perception." So do not be surprised if the name "body," by analogy with the names of the body's parts, which are referred to the powers of the soul, is applied to the whole soul in the saying "the lamp of the body is the eye." We do not say this as though the word "body" is explained figuratively everywhere. We know that the name "body" is also used of other things, as in "do not fear those who kill the body," and "you are the body of Christ."

Fragment 54

I think the meaning of the next saying is this. If, because "your body has become full of light," the body has been enlightened by its lamp, and there is no part in you still dark, since you no longer sin at all, then the whole body will be so full of light that its rays can be compared to a lamp in a flash of lightning that gives light, even if it does not dispel darkness. The enlightenment that comes from the mind is like the brightest lightning. The light in the body is like a lamp in the flashing lightning. By nature that lamp is darkness, and it is led wherever the mind wishes. So if the mind of those living in ignorance and lack of knowledge, though by nature it is light, is darkness, then certainly the whole body, that is, the passionate part of the soul, which is the spirited and desiring part, is much more darkness.

Fragment 55

“See to it, then, that the light in you is not darkness.” He says: it was possible for you to make your mind pure, and through this to make both your words and your actions shine. But you do the opposite. From the very place where you ought to bring out light, you bring out darkness, since you harbor envy out of wicked thoughts.

Fragment 56

"Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered." Either he is speaking about that time when "God will judge the secrets of men" and "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make plain the counsels of hearts." Or he means this: however much someone tries to cover up good things by accusing them, by nature what is good cannot be covered.

Fragment 57

"Are not five sparrows sold for two assarions?" Notice that Luke did not speak of a sparrow falling to the ground, as Matthew did. Here the five sparrows hint at the five senses of the righteous person. These senses perceive things above and beyond the human: they see divine things, hear the voice of God, taste "the living bread," smell the fragrance of Christ's perfumes, and touch "the oil of gladness," the living Word. Though they are despised by those who judge "the things of the Spirit" to be folly and cheap, they "are not forgotten before God." If the Word himself was sold for thirty pieces of silver, it is no wonder that divine senses go for two assarions. Compare the passage that says not even the smallest sparrow "is forgotten before God" with the passages that show God forgetting some people because of their sins. Taken literally, these words show how fine-grained God's providence is, and that his knowledge reaches down to the smallest things. Taken spiritually, people fall to the earth like sparrows. The mind should be carried upward, but instead it seeks the things below, caught in the evils of the flesh. It has been handed over "to passions of dishonor," and has lost both its freedom and its honor. Such is the person who was lifted up by the Word and then set his mind on earthly things. Again, on the literal level, "it will not fall to the ground without your Father" does not point to his will but to his foreknowledge. Of the things that happen, some happen by his will, some by his good pleasure, and some by his permission.

Fragment 58

“And I will say to my soul: Soul, you have many good things.” “You have many good things laid up.” He spoke as one who was lying down below, “You have good things laid up for many years,” and he was mistaken in his judgment about what is good. He did not know that the things that are truly good are not in the cursed earth but in heaven. There the rest and joy of the blessed in Christ Jesus last not “for many years” but for endless ages.

Fragment 59

"Let your loins be girded." The loins of those who live in purity are girded. But since our life is also a night, we need a lamp. The lamp is the mind, which is the eye of the soul. And if wakefulness belongs to the "inner person," it is reasonable that we need to be awake for much or all of this life, both because of those who lie in wait (I mean "rulers and authorities") [the text is defective here, "against which . . ."], and so that we may find "a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the God of Jacob," and sometimes so that we may open to the master when he knocks. Notice that a reward is given for staying awake. For he says, "He will gird himself," and he is "girded about the loin" in the sense of the words, "The Lord has clothed himself with power and girded himself." In that power he will "make each one recline" according to worth, and will "serve" each one according to worth, "rendering to each according to his works."

Fragment 60

Furthermore, the thief comes plotting against each person's soul, and the Word of God appears to guard his own. So stay awake. If "the thief" comes and finds the master of the house awake, he will not break into "his house." And if "the Son of Man" arrives, you will be able to open to him "immediately" when he knocks. For if he finds you asleep and you do not open when he knocks, he goes away and leaves you. After this life, the one who has stayed awake in it "will sleep sweetly and will not be afraid of a terror that comes." So "David fell asleep with his fathers," and so did those after him. Up to now I have not found this written of any of the saints who came from foreign seed. Perhaps that is also why the apostle says, "We shall not all fall asleep." If we shall all fall asleep, then "blessed are the slaves whom the Lord, when he comes, finds awake." They are blessed because he gives them their reward without delay, since they are "girded about the loin with righteousness." He comes at the time when a person's soul is to be demanded, whatever sort of person he may be. For if he came to the one who said, "I will pull down my storehouses and make bigger ones," and "said to him, 'Fool, this night they are demanding your soul from you,'" how much more will he come to the blessed and holy, who after "departing" will be with the Lord?

Fragment 61

Luke 12:36: “And you be like people waiting for their master.” There is sleep and there is wakefulness, in the inner person just as in the outer. We are required to stay awake, as the Savior says: “Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation.” In Proverbs it is also said: “Give no sleep to your eyes, and no slumber to your eyelids.” But there is also a time to sleep, when the Savior says: “Sleep on now, and rest,” and when Solomon says: “If you sleep, you will be without fear; and if you sleep, your sleep will be sweet, and you will not be afraid of terror when it comes upon you.”

Fragment 62

Still, for most of this life, or even all of it, we must keep watch. One reason is that the enemies lie in wait. They are not "blood and flesh," but "authorities and world-rulers of this world, and the spiritual forces of wickedness." By staying awake we may be saved "like gazelles from snares and like a bird from a trap." We are also to have our loins girded and our lamps burning, so that we become "like people waiting for their master, so that when he comes and knocks, we may open to him at once." Consider also whether there is a reason, because of the first, second and third watch of the night, or even a fourth, that Solomon says, so that we may be watching in all of them: "Guard your heart with every watch."

Fragment 63

Luke 12:37: “Truly I say to you, that he will gird himself and have them recline.” I think Christ “will gird himself” for this reason: he is about to have those whom he finds watching recline at table, since according to Isaiah “he will be girded with righteousness around the loins.” What of the words, “he will come and serve them”? See whether you can name two kinds of service. One is the service in this life, of which he said: “I am in your midst, not as one who reclines at table, but as one who serves.” The other is the one he speaks of here: “And if he comes in the second watch, and comes in the third watch, and finds them so, those servants are blessed.”

Fragment 64

Luke 12:42: “Who then is the faithful, wise steward?” It seems to me that here “faithful” and “wise” should not be understood as referring to one single virtue. “Faithful” does not refer to faith in the particular sense the Scripture gives that word, and “wise” does not refer to some other virtue by itself. For certainly the faithful person is wise, and conversely the wise person is faithful, since the virtues follow one another. But the name “wise” is sometimes used not for the virtue of prudence that has been fully established, but to describe someone who is resourceful, who can even be a bad person. In this sense “the serpent was the wisest of all the wild animals on the earth.” In the same way here, “faithful” does not mean perfect; it means that the person’s purpose has leaned toward faith in God. In this sense it is possible that not every faithful person is wise, and not every wise person is faithful. That the steward too, according to the divine writings themselves, is wise but not faithful, is clear from this. It was not the act of a faithful man to squander the rich man’s property, to call in each of his master’s debtors and reduce the debt. That he was not faithful is plainly seen. But that he was in some sense wise is also clear: the Lord praises his resourcefulness, while blaming his unfaithfulness, and for that reason says to him: “You can no longer be steward.” Perhaps for ordinary people in the crowds, faith, as we said before, is enough for salvation. But stewards need both, the faithful and the wise. For a steward who is not like this will not be able to judge the right time for giving out the measured portion of grain to those under him, or what suits each one.

So there are many stewards of the churches who are faithful but not prudent, and some who are the opposite. For this reason the Lord put his words in the form of a question, to show very clearly how rare and hard to find are stewards who are faithful and prudent together. The one who is found, the Lord appointed over his servants. In the same way the Savior chose Judas. He was not ignorant of what would happen later, but he made use of him for the work of apostolic service during the time before his transgression, when his will was still moving toward virtue. The good laid up for the faithful and prudent steward is [greater] than what is said to the one who multiplied the mina tenfold or fivefold. This is no wonder, since it is greater even than what is given to others who differ from these. Fixed cities are handed over to those who worked with the minas, and great numbers to those who doubled the talents. Much greater than these is to be set not only over many things but “over all the possessions” of the Lord. This is laid up for the faithful and prudent steward, who through

faith has set himself [worthy] of all his possessions. You may ask whether, if several faithful and prudent stewards are found, each of them can be set "over all the possessions" of the Lord. For if it is "over all," how does another have a place over the ten cities, and still more over several? Let this be said as an encouragement.

Fragment 65

"For from now on there will be five in one house, divided." The persons in the Gospel are six, so we must say that one person, the bride, is cut in two, into daughter-in-law and daughter, since the same woman quarrels with both her mother and her mother-in-law. In this way it turns out that three are divided against two and two against three. Now for the higher sense. The five senses are like five in one house, the human being. Before the Word comes to them, they agree together in pleasures, but when he takes up residence they are divided. Two are the more philosophical: sight, by which we look at the world, admire its order, and so admire its Creator; and hearing, by which we are taught by the word of God. These stand against the remaining three: taste, smell and touch. Those are the slavish senses, not naturally suited to philosophy, and the three work rather against the two. The saying "father will be divided against son" must be read as a fresh beginning, not connected with the earlier words. Literally it shows the division of believers from unbelievers. Symbolically, the "father," the mind, is divided "against son," a wicked line of reasoning, by not agreeing with it. "And son against father" is the one who does not bury his dead father. "Mother against daughter" is the soul not accepting its own wicked fruit. "Daughter against mother" is the soul no longer united with matter. "Mother-in-law against daughter-in-law" is the mother of the Law (the husband of the soul under him), I mean the Holy Spirit, who has left the people of the circumcision. "Daughter-in-law against mother-in-law" is the people who, through sinning, were separated from the Spirit.

Fragment 66

"Someone had a fig tree planted." A fourth way to understand it is as the time of the incarnation. In that time he pricks Israel and digs around it, warming it, so as to make them fervent in spirit. But since after so many warnings they stayed fruitless, the fig tree was cut down and the nations were grafted into their root, for the root remained. Or else we must understand the vinedresser to be some angel, commanded by God to take charge of Jerusalem, which is itself compared to a fruitless fig tree.

Fragment 67

"It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid." There is another way to take it: the woman as the church, the leaven as the Holy Spirit, and the three measures as body, spirit and soul. These are made holy by the leaven of the Holy Spirit, so that with the Holy Spirit they become one lump. In this way "our body and the spirit and the soul may be kept whole, blameless, in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ," as the divine Paul says.

Fragment 68

"When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends." According to the letter, then, we are commanded not to call friends and neighbors but "the poor and the maimed, the lame and the blind." But suppose he is not saying this as a wise accommodation, as in parables, so that even the simpler may be helped as far as they can. Then he is turning us away from our duties. For it is not wise to invite poor people who are not believers, or to refuse to invite poor people who are faithful friends. Perhaps, then, the meaning is mystical. "Friends" are those who delight in the word and in the teachings of the truth. "Brothers" are those who hold kindred teachings. "Relatives" are those who are further off but want to draw near to us in teaching. "Neighbors" are those whose buildings of doctrine are not altogether far from ours. Taken generally, then, "rich" is to be understood [ploysqioyw, the Greek word is corrupt]. But the man who is rich in what he thinks are true teachings is called to the truly true word. He speaks against the truth and, as it were, invites the teacher in return. But since "not many among us are wise," though some are, we must ask whether these too should be invited. Those who announce lectures invite the rich and not the poor. But the one who serves the word for true glory is free of vainglory. "Invite the poor," he says. That means those who lack words, so that you may be enriched. "The maimed" are those whose understanding has been damaged, so that you may heal them. "The lame" are those who limp in the word, so that they may make straight paths. "The blind" are those who lack the power of insight, so that they may see the true light. "They cannot repay you" means the same as this: they do not know how to carry on a discussion by question and answer, or by dialectic. Out of love for humanity, God and Father is proclaimed as a man for those not yet able to "eat lunch in the kingdom of God." As a man he gives a dinner, and a great one, for the dinner surpasses the lunch. The lunch is the introductory words, or the ethical ones, or the ancient oracles. The dinner is the mystical words for those who are advancing, or the words of the new covenant. "Resurrection of the just" he says here, which John in the Revelation calls the first.

Fragment 69

“And they all alike began to make excuses.” They were called as people naturally quick. But they fall away from the calling in three ways: by the appearance of higher intelligible teachings, by the pursuit of sensible things instead of intelligible ones, and by love of pleasure. Those who bought a field, and who therefore decline the dinner, are those who received other teachings about the divine that have great plausibility and variety of argument. They also despise the field that has in itself a “treasure” and powers. The man who has not seen or tested the word he acquired, because he was already taken up by it out of necessity and not willingly, goes out from the dinner and from the one who called him, and perhaps even from himself. They say “I ask you,” as if they respected the one who called only in word. The man who bought five yoke of oxen is the one who despises intelligible nature and philosophizes about sensible things. He too did not test from the beginning what he had bought. If the number belongs to matter, this man honored material things. So he too declined the intelligible dinner. That is why in some copies, instead of “I ask you,” the text reads “and for this reason I cannot come.” For those who choose sensible things say that the incorporeal cannot be grasped. The other is the one who said, “I have married a wife.” He seems to have found wisdom and shared in it, yet rejects the true one. Or he is the one joined to the flesh, “a lover of pleasure rather than a lover of God.”

Fragment 70

“For which of you, wanting to build a tower…” The tower, with its height, span and loftiness, would be the word about God. So he hints through the parable: if you are about to speak about God, consider whether you are able to finish what you begin. The word demands that everything be brought to completion for the sake of speaking about God. Otherwise you may begin the teachings of godliness, leave the word about God unfinished, and not build a crowning top upon it. For if he has not built the crown on it, someone will fall from the tower and die.

Fragment 71

You can also understand the prodigal's desire to be filled with the carob pods in this way. The rational nature, once it has fallen into irrationality, still desires something, even if it is not in better reasonings, at least in whatever it has ended up among. Carob pods taste sweet and fatten the body, but they give the refuse no way out. So they would stand for the persuasive arguments of those who love matter and love the body, who call pleasure a good, who have itching ears and turn aside to myths. [And the wicked hand on nothing that no one has seen, so that they will not be refuted.] Besides, the arguments of [such people] give no nourishment, and they cannot fill the part of us that receives and distributes rational food.

Fragment 72

"Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you." I left the heavenly things behind, and I added to it the ungodliness against you. The Word shows human misery to be misery by telling the story of his departure and his strange conduct. But the Word does not bring him back to his original good fortune until he has felt his present disaster, come to himself, and rehearsed the words of repentance. For he says "I have sinned" and so on. He would not have added to his confession the sin "against heaven" unless he was convinced that heaven was his homeland, which he had left when he went wrong. For this reason the rehearsing of such a confession makes the father easy for him to approach, so that the father even ran ahead to meet him and welcomed him with a kiss on the neck.

Fragment 73

If we must look at this passage in a still loftier way, the father begins with ethical teachings, which are like food, in the words “having eaten.” He goes on to teachings of contemplation, which are like drink, in the words “let us be merry.” For “wine is the beginning of good cheer,” as it is written.

Fragment 74

The word “symphony” is properly used for harmonies of voices in music. Among musicians some notes are in concord with certain notes and out of concord with others. The Gospel writing also knows the word used for musical harmonies, as it is here. In the book of Daniel, too, it is recorded that Nebuchadnezzar gave a command. When the assembled people heard “the sound of the trumpet, pipe and lyre, sambuca and harp, and symphony and every kind of music,” they were to fall down and worship the golden image. “Because they received him back healthy”: healthy, because through repentance he had thrown off the sickness.

Fragment 75

“It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away.” The one stroke is not only the iota among the Greeks, but also, among the Hebrews, the letter they call “yod.” The words “one iota or one stroke” can be said symbolically of Jesus. The beginning of his name is written with the iota among the Greeks, and also with the yod among the Hebrews. So “one iota or one stroke” is Jesus, the Word of God in the law. He does not pass away from it “until all things have come to pass,” and he does not fall. [For he does fall, for salvation, so that he may bear “much fruit.”] But if he did fall, it would be easier for “heaven and earth to pass away” than for “one stroke” to be lost from the law concerning him. Having “fallen into the earth,” he died so that he might bear more fruit. He was not defeated. Rather, he “humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Fragment 76

"There was a certain rich man." In the words of Solomon, "a good name is better than great riches." But this man did not think so. He thought it better to have great riches than a good name. So he is called by what he loved: he is named "rich," not "holy" or "righteous." The poor man, who had nothing in this world, is called Lazarus, a bare name. But notice how the Savior of all sets out the marks that characterize the rich man. "He was clothed," he says, "in purple and fine linen, and made merry splendidly every day." He does not even give the man his proper name. He says, "a certain man," so that he attaches obscurity to what is common, and in that obscurity brings the common lot of men in for disgrace. With the righteous it is not so. How is it, then? "There was a man," he says, "in the land of Ausitis, whose name was Job." And, "There was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Symeon." Why? Because of the one he adds, "And that man was blameless, guileless, righteous, true, God-fearing, abstaining from every evil thing." And of the other, "And this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit of God was upon him." Job also was rich. But he did not live in luxury and self-indulgence. With a loving mind his house was open to anyone in need. He wronged no one; rather, when others were wronged, he helped them, and he supplied widows and orphans with what they needed to live. For these are the just acts of righteous rich men.

Fragment 77

"He sees Abraham far off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Someone wanted to discredit the account of the rich man and the poor man. Out of ignorance of the Gospel he raised this objection: if Lazarus was reclining in the bosom of Abraham, then before he departed this life another was reclining in Abraham's bosom, and another before him. And when yet another righteous man departs, he says, the poor man will have to get up. But the man who raises this objection did not see what Abraham's bosom is. He did not see that it is possible for countless people to rest together in Abraham's bosom, sharing in what was revealed to him. John, the beloved, is a parallel. At the supper he reclined "on the bosom of Jesus," as the history tells it. He was counted worthy of this honor as one judged worthy of his teacher's special love. But the account also points to something symbolic. John, reclining close to the Word and resting in the more mystical teachings, was reclining in the bosom of the Word. This corresponds to the fact that the "only-begotten" Word himself is written of as being "in the bosom of the Father."

Fragment 78

"You know the commandments." The madness of the Marcionites [and the Manichaeans] is refuted by this passage. They say the law is foreign to Christ. Yet Mark says, "Jesus, looking at him, loved him." He would not have loved, for his keeping of something foreign, a man who spoke boldly about that keeping. The passage raises a question: how was he loved, when he was not going to follow toward life? The answer is that for his earlier conduct the man who kept the law was worthy of love. But by his faintheartedness toward what is perfect, he did not allow the love given for his earlier conduct to become complete.

Fragment 79

"I will judge you out of your own mouth, wicked servant." We will all be judged for our whole life, at the time when an account that speaks for us is brought into the middle. That account will include "every idle word that people speak," and also the case where someone once gave "a cup of cold water" only "in the name of a disciple." These things will happen when what Daniel wrote comes to pass: "Books were opened, and the court took its seat." It will be like a written record of everything we have said, done and thought. By divine power everything hidden in us will be made plain, and everything covered will be uncovered. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for the things done through the body, whether good or bad." Let no one suppose that such a reckoning of everyone, over a whole lifetime here, will need long ages. God will wish to stir up in everyone's memory, all at once, the good or evil done through the whole of life. He will do this by indescribable power, and he will remind each person of what he did. Then, becoming aware of what we have done, we will understand why we are punished or honored. We must dare to say that the time of the expected judgment needs no stretch of time. The resurrection is said to happen "in an instant, in the blink of an eye," and I think the judgment will be the same. In this parable ten servants are found, each receiving one mina. In another parable one servant receives five talents, another two, another one. Elsewhere there are debtors, one owing five hundred denarii and another fifty. Suppose someone considers how varied the human soul is. Souls differ greatly from one another in natural aptitude or lack of it, toward more or fewer virtues, and toward these virtues or those. Then perhaps he will grasp how each soul has come, and with which of the householder's coins it appeared. He will see this together with the fulfilling of the word, and with the care and training that follow that fulfilling, toward what is needed.

Fragment 80

The Jews thought and acted like robbers. They had made God's house "a den of robbers," and for that reason Jesus drove them out of it. About the robber Barabbas they shouted, "Release Barabbas for us." About the Savior of the world they shouted, "Crucify him, crucify him." So to this day the Jews do not have Jesus, because they have not believed in the Son of God. They do have with them Barabbas the robber, who belongs to "the spiritual forces of wickedness." He had already been arrested and thrown into prison, and they demanded his release to their own harm. This is why Barabbas the robber rules over the unbelieving Jews.

Fragment 81

This saying troubled some people so much, as though it did not fit with the rest, that they dared to suspect it had been added to the Gospel by some meddlers: “Today you will be with me in paradise.” We say, more simply, that perhaps, before he went away to what is called the heart of the earth, he restored the believing robber to God’s paradise.

Fragment 82

John did not mention this at all, and Matthew and Mark named neither the sun nor an eclipse. Luke says, “the sun failing.” Perhaps he is describing what happened in our own experience. It may have been a dark cloud, or clouds running under the sun’s rays and cutting them off from the land of Judea. Or the air there may have thickened, sharing in what had happened, as the land around Judea did, and the rocks and the tombs. In many places Scripture calls all of Judea “all the land.” This happened so that people would know that the one hanging on the tree is the very one who took creation as his fellow-soldier. He did the same when “he made war on the Egyptians for their sake,” when the sun’s light failed and darkness was spread over their whole country.

Fragment 83

"When the sun failed." Zechariah also prophesied about this eclipse, saying: "In that day there will be no light. There will be cold and frost for one day, and that day is known to the Lord. It will be neither day nor night, and toward evening there will be light." The darkness is an image of the darkening of those who lay hands on the Light. For as there was darkness for the Egyptians and light for the sons of Israel, so now there is light for the church, but for the Jews a darkness of three hours. It is a darkness of the Father's light, of the radiance of Christ, and of the shining of the Holy Spirit. Man was made on the sixth day. So perhaps for this reason the Lord, suffering for the salvation of men, was hung on the cross at the sixth hour of the sixth day. He did this to call back the one who was made on the sixth day and fell out of paradise at the sixth hour.

Fragment 84

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." This cry, which he uttered on the cross, teaches that the souls of the saints are no longer shut up in Hades as they were before. They are with God, since this has happened in Christ as a firstfruits. The place where souls were held and confined was below, but the Lord, through himself, moved this journey from downward to upward. Human nature was found in him to be rich in sinlessness. So he has made something new for us: souls released from their bodies are sent "into the hands of the living God." The holy Stephen knew this when he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." The word "I commit" teaches that the passion was voluntary, and shows that the spirit is not destroyed. [For "I will commit" would have indicated that he would receive it back again.]

Fragment 85

"Jesus himself drew near and went with them." The glory of the Lord's body, which Paul also mentions, was shown to the disciples at the transfiguration on the mountain. But after the resurrection he had to appear to the apostles and to the five hundred disciples, so that they would believe in the resurrection. So he was seen as they were able to see him, [and] as they knew him to have suffered, and he showed them the scars left by his sufferings. Notice also that when he was going away he left them peace, as John wrote, and when he came among them again he gave peace. Peace is a sweet thing and a sweet name.

Fragment 86

"Were not our hearts burning within us?" [Another way of taking it:] Simon and Cleopas, in confessing "our heart was burning" and what follows, make clear something about the Savior's words. The words he spoke came from love toward those who heard him. They had in them a flame of fire, and they burned, setting the hearts of the hearers alight with love for God.

Fragment 87

"He lifted up his hands and blessed them." Something like this is written about Aaron in Leviticus: that "lifting up his hands over the people, he blessed them." I take the passage to hint here that anyone who blesses another must be adorned with works that are outstanding and lifted above those of the many. Aaron's hands are lifted up when he is about to bless the people. If someone held his hands down toward earthly things, he could not accomplish what he wanted for anyone. In the same way, Moses' hands did not help the people when they lay down, but only when they were lifted up. The lifting up of the Savior's hands was a symbol of this. By works beyond human power he lifted his hands and saved those who believe. So perhaps everyone who is lifted up in his works has been crucified. In this sense Paul said, "I have been crucified to the world, and the world to me." That is: the account of the world has been understood by me, and it has been lifted up and no longer lies below. For to the one who has not understood the account of the world's making, the word has not been crucified. I think being crucified is good, as Paul experienced it, crucified with Christ. And the world, in relation to Paul's mind, was lifted up and understood by him. In another sense, the Lord lifts up his hands in order to put power into the disciples through the blessing.

Fragment 88

"Give us each day our bread for the coming day [epiousion]." "Each day" is more emphatic than Matthew's "today." The inner man, who is properly the real being, dies if he does not get living bread, just as the body does if it is not fed. Death is the enemy of life, and he falls to it. Small-minded people suppose that the teacher is speaking about bodily bread when he says "not about tomorrow." They especially take "epiousion" to mean "the coming" or "the approaching" day. This is clear from his saying, "for you do not know what the coming day will bring forth," that is, the tomorrow that is approaching. As for the followers of Manes, either they will allegorize, which is not their custom, or they will be asking for the bread of the Creator.

Fragment 89

“Since many have undertaken to compile.” The word “undertaken” indicates that some came to the writing of gospels without a gift of grace. The word “compile” means to set out, to explain, to write down.

Fragment 90

"Just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses handed down to us." Luke plainly admitted that he received his material from those who had seen it with their own eyes and heard it with their own ears. He said, "just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and became servants of the word handed down to us." We should trust him and Mark as men who wrote down accurately what they had heard. We should trust John and Matthew as men who write what they had seen. So the lawful Gospels are to be honored equally. We honor not only the sight of those who saw but also the hearing of those who heard. For true men succeed true men, and they pass on to us the light that was handed to them, and they receive from us the praise they deserve.

Fragment 91

"Both were righteous." Perhaps someone will say: the law says, "If you keep the commandments of the Lord your God, he will multiply your grain and your wine and your oil, and there will be no one childless or barren among you." If these two were righteous, then, where is the blessing? The reason is that those whom God advances to something great, such as Isaac, Samson and Samuel, are customarily brought beyond what the law provides. For the labor of a barren woman is close to that of a virgin.

Fragment 92

"For he will be great before the Lord." He will be great because he continually lifts the eye of his soul toward God and looks to him alone. This is in line with the one who says, "To you I lifted up my eyes, you who dwell in heaven."

Fragment 93

"Wine and strong drink he shall not drink." "Strong drink" [sikera] is anything that can make a person drunk, [even if] it is not from the vine. It especially means what is prepared from dates.

Fragment 94

"And he will go before him." "He will go before in the spirit and [power] of Elijah." That is, he goes before in the spirit and power of Elijah, who is the forerunner of the Lord's second coming. As the prophet says, "I will send you Elijah the Tishbite before the great and conspicuous day of the Lord comes." In the same way John became the forerunner of the first coming. He came "in spirit" because the grace of the all-holy Spirit that was on Elijah was likewise on the forerunner. He came "in power" because of the greatness of the ministry that was fulfilled by them both.

Fragment 95

"To turn the hearts of fathers to children." The same things passed over to John. But this is not how the order of nature wants it, which is that children follow their fathers rather than fathers serving sons. But he wants the ancient people to follow [the new people]. The ancient people stood in the place of fathers, and the second and new people stand in the place of sons, as it says, "Instead of your fathers, sons were born to you." So he reverses the order, for he puts the synagogue back under the church. Explaining who the fathers are and who the children are, he adds, "and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous." The old among the Jews must follow the wisdom of the righteous.

Fragment 96

"When he came out he could not speak to them." Zechariah disbelieved the one who announced the birth of the voice that reveals the Word, and so he lost his own voice. He got it back and ended his painful silence when the forerunner was born, who is the voice of the Word, and when he wrote that "John is his name." So we must give ear to the voice, so that the mind may receive the word that the voice reveals.

Fragment 97

“When the days of his service were completed.” Zechariah had heard beforehand that something wonderful was going to happen to him. Even so, he did not hurry ahead of the proper time to make way for the prophecy. He stayed until he had finished his spiritual service, and only then served the prophecy through bodily things. In this he teaches that everything must be put second to the honor owed to God.

Fragment 98

“She hid herself for five months.” For this reason Elizabeth said nothing, until almost everyone was exposing her and saying that she was pregnant, because of what they saw, even though she kept the matter hidden.

Fragment 99

The words “he will be” and “he will be called” fit the plan of salvation in the flesh. So does “the Lord will give him.” It is because of this plan [that he is said to receive] “the throne of David.” Yet he is the same one, and in a way fitting for God he is also king forever.

Fragment 100

“Behold, the [servant] of the Lord.” Mary was gracious and said to the angel, “Behold, the [servant] of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”

Fragment 101

"He looked upon her humility." The Word did not come to be in Mary simply or without discrimination. It was because of her surpassing humility, which God loves and exalts highly, since she imitates him who humbled himself and took the form of a slave. So she says, "when he looked upon the humility of his servant." In Isaiah he says, "On whom will I look, except on the humble and quiet one who trembles at my words?" Then she says, "because he looked upon the humility of his servant" (for I am his servant as his creature, just like the rest of creation), "from now on they will call me blessed." Not you alone, Elizabeth, but all [the generations] of those who believe. For even if what the mother of God said was not evident to people at that time, now, day by day, it speaks more widely, and the truth of what she prophesied becomes plain.

Fragment 102

"The Mighty One has done great things for me." Someone might disbelieve that the conception could really take place, if she conceived while a virgin. So she [sets] the unbelief [to rest] by the name "the Mighty One." In this way a person may credit the accomplishment to the power of the one who works it. He will then not examine the matter by the course of nature and fall away from true assent to what truly happened.

Fragment 103

“He brought down rulers from their thrones.” He also calls “rulers” the very ones whom he brought down and then lifted up. These are the ones who humbled themselves “under his mighty hand.” To them he has given “authority to tread upon snakes and scorpions and upon all the power of the enemy.” The “hungry” are those from the nations, starving for divine things and for teaching. “He filled” them “with good things” of the new covenant.

Fragment 104

"He was in the deserts." So everything about him was strange. His food was strange. He was chosen out of the world, as one announcing the Christ who is above the world. He was in the desert from the start, living outside the wickedness found among people, so that he would be trustworthy when he rebuked it. He did not begin to frequent the people in the cities until the Spirit in him urged him to show himself publicly.

Fragment 105

"Now it happened in those days." Which days? Those in which the Baptist was born. The forerunner of the Savior was six months ahead of him in the conception, and was born six months before him. As the more careful students have observed, he also died six months before the Savior's ascension. "When Augustus was the first to reign," he says, "a decree went out." Before Augustus, Julius Caesar alone ruled, and he came after the consuls. Before him the pattern was consuls as kings, each for one year. But when Augustus became king, he ended the rule of many and, having taken hold, stayed on as king. The preaching was about to run to the ends of the earth. The apostles could not pass from nation to nation, struggling with different kings and being attacked by each one. So God leveled the earth beforehand under a single kingdom, so that the apostles might preach as though into one kingdom.

Fragment 106

"He brought him up to Jerusalem." The Lord is circumcised on the eighth day. He is named Jesus, as had been foretold. Then, when the days were completed, he is brought up to Jerusalem and presented to the Lord according to the law that says, "Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord." Anyone can grasp one thing here: he himself is the one who sanctifies, and he himself is the one who is sanctified. Not everyone grasps the other: these things were spoken and carried out in the ordinary way, yet they pointed to something deeper than what could be seen. For on behalf of a male firstborn, and on behalf of him as he was brought, "a pair of turtledoves and two pigeons" were offered. I think the turtledoves are meant to show self-control and [the rest of the sentence is missing or corrupt in the Greek].

Fragment 107

"After three days they found him." They did not find him on the first or the second day, but on the third, when he himself chose to show himself to those seeking him. The account also holds a riddle. In his twelfth year he is hidden for three days. Before the passion, he announces the passion, the one that concerned the twelve disciples. At that time he was hidden from them too, and he rose and appeared [again; the Greek reads "a city"] [before the three], the three-day time before the time. [The last words are uncertain and the text may be corrupt.]

Fragment 108

"In the fifteenth year of Tiberius." Christ was born in the forty-first year of Caesar Augustus. Augustus reigned fifty-six years, so fifteen remained. Then Tiberius reigned after him. In the fifteenth year of Tiberius's reign John came baptizing, and at that time Jesus was also baptized, "being about thirty years old," as the evangelist says further on.

Fragment 109

"In the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas." He also mentions the high priests Annas and Caiaphas to show that they were high priests from the time John came preaching. They began at that time and remained in the high priesthood until the Lord's passion. For about Caiaphas he says that, when he said about Christ, "It is to our advantage that one man [die] for the people," the writer immediately added, "for he was high priest of that [year]." So he said this two years before the passion, for the Lord suffered in the thirty-third year, after three months.

Fragment 110

"He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives." Whom does he call captives? Is it those who had earlier been taken captive and bound by the devil, whom Christ set free from captivity when he came and brought down the rebel and boastful tyrant, Satan? He calls the same people "blind" and "broken." For Christ himself flashed the light of the mind on those whose understanding was darkened. He also released from the bonds of sin those who were "broken and crushed in heart," that is, those crushed by the weight of sin, or those who are humble in spirit. To these he also proclaims "the acceptable year of the Lord." And what year is this, in which the Savior's preaching took place, if not the one in which the true Lamb was offered for the sin of the world?

Fragment 111

"But he, wanting to justify himself, said." The lawyer had been praised by the Savior for giving a good answer. Even so, he burst out with arrogance. He counted no one as his neighbor, as though no one were a match for him in righteousness. For he thought that only the righteous person is neighbor to the righteous, and only the lofty to the lofty, someone who rivals him in virtue. He did not know that this destroys righteousness: not doing out of love what one does. So he is found lacking in love, both toward God and toward his neighbor.

Fragment 112

13:6 “A certain man had a fig tree planted.” [Others explain his coming three times like this: first, the time of Moses and Aaron; second, the time when Joshua son of Nun lived, and after him the judges; third, after these, the time when “the prophets until John” the Baptist appeared.] Israel was fruitless in its seasons. As far as God’s purpose was concerned, worship carried out in shadows and types could not be accepted. They came to spiritual worship altogether fruitless, and so Israel was cast away. A fourth time can also be understood: the time of the incarnation. In it he pricks Israel and digs around it, warming it so that he might make them fervent in spirit. But since they stayed fruitless even after so many threats, the fig tree was cut out and the Gentiles were grafted in “to their root.” The root remained. Or the vinedresser should be understood as some angel commanded by God to take charge of Jerusalem, which is itself compared to a fruitless fig tree. Let me then set out the account briefly. The fig tree is Jerusalem [or the synagogue of the Jews, or humanity]. The “master of the house,” whose fig tree it was, is God, and the Savior himself. The “vinedresser” is the Son of God. That he came “a third time” means that he came through Moses, through the prophets, and through himself. Or the first year is the one in which he first gave Adam a command, saying, “from every tree in paradise you shall eat for food,” and so on. The second is the one in which he gave commandments to Israel in the law through Moses. The third is the one in which he himself, in person, gave the perfect law in the gospel. Or he means this: the first year is the time of Moses and Aaron; the second is the time of Joshua son of Nun and the judges; the third is the time when “the prophets [until] John” appeared; and the fourth is the time of the incarnation, in which he himself, through the gospel, announced the good news of the kingdom of the heavens to all.

Fragment 113

9:10 But Matthew says … “flee to the other.”

Fragment 114

9:12 But according to the higher sense … feeding each tribe.

Fragment 115

9:18 He asks, not out of ignorance … they have taken up symbolic [features] of him.

Fragment 116

He inquires of the disciples … will enter into it.

Fragment 117

9:23 In another way someone denies himself … in doing right, [the one] being saved.

Fragment 118

9:27 These things refer to Peter and James … of his transfiguration.

Fragment 119

But if one must look into something a little more closely … within the perfect only.

Fragment 120

9:28 And so, in order that, taking it up again … and the holy passion.

Fragment 121

For since in six days … being seen by the one who sees.

Fragment 122

Not bearing the power of the voice … to appear there to many.

Fragment 123

9:30 Origen on the words, “Behold, two men were talking with him”: … for whom it has been prepared, was said on account of these.

Fragment 124

9:34 But the voice from the cloud … from where they had come.

Fragment 125

9:37 But one must look at these things more loftily … in the branches of such a faith.

Fragment 126

9:44 By whom, then, is he going to be handed over? … upon us the light of God.

Fragment 127

9:47 Since the Son is inseparable … and a child free of evil.

Fragment 128

9:48 For such as the child is from its birth … has become toward the children.

Fragment 129

11:51 Therefore, of Elizabeth and the child … the blood with the blood.

Fragment 130

We find Zacharias in the books of Kingdoms … the father of the father.

Fragment 131

14:18 That, then, is the general sense of the parable. But you might also take it differently, according to the passage. As far as we are human … “among gods.”

Fragment 132

17:34 Both can also be signified … as unworthy, being sent away.

Fragment 133

18:24 Observe that he did not shut out the rich man altogether … and the things of what is called.

Fragment 134

19:29 The two disciples, that is, Peter and Paul … into Jerusalem.

Fragment 135

23:17 Why did they need to release … because of the people, Jonathan.

Fragment 136

It is likely that, since a truce had just been made … such a thing was customary for them.

Fragment 137

23:39 Matthew, passing over it, said … “in the [δείσ].”

Fragment 138

Matthew 13:44 Likeness and parable, the difference … the word of the sowing.

Fragment 139

Matthew 13:44 According to another interpretation it would be … in his wishes.

Fragment 140

Matthew 13:45 Those who [do] not [speak] about pearls … the knowledge of Christ.

Fragment 141

Matthew 13:47 Further, the dragnet is the one from the ancients … the furnace of fire.

Fragment 142

Matthew 20:1 These five intervals … is referred to the kingdom of God.

Fragment 143

Perhaps, then, the whole life of human beings … the wage of salvation.

Fragment 144

Through which the mark of the kingdom seems to me … is referred to the kingdom.

Fragment 145

But this one alone, besides the three … the prophetic writings, the evangelists.

Fragment 146

It is not unprofitable to set alongside … by himself, a son of God.

Fragment 147

[So also Origen, who says that] … all nourishment of the life of the world.

Fragment 148

The word “epiousios” is found in none of the Greeks … is the bread.

Fragment 149

Historically, after the sending out … all conceit.

Fragment 150

Indeed, the laws concerning leprosy … until the leprosy has disappeared.

Fragment 151

What was said by Daniel to one of the elders who accused holy Susanna: “For already the angel of God, having received [the order],” they say, “from God, will split you in two.” He says this will certainly happen to him at the judgment, in keeping with what the Lord said, that “he will cut him in two.” And Ammonius, in interpreting a prophetic passage, etc. . . .

Fragment 152

What difference do these have … the sayings of the wise and riddles.

Fragment 153

Since prudence is virtue … the Lord prepared the heavens.

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